

Central Louisiana population grows a bit

By Bret H. McCormick
bmcormick@thetowntalk.com
(318) 487-6346

Central Louisiana's population has grown nearly 2.5 percent over the past decade, an increase of more than 11,000 residents over the region's 13 parishes.

It was the second straight decade Cenla's population has grown, though the region has only gained 0.65 percent over its 1980 population, according to figures released by the U.S. Census Bureau in its 2010 Census.

About 35 percent of the new residents in the area are of Hispanic or Latino heritage, making that easily the fastest-growing segment of the region's population.

The Hispanic population in Rapides Parish nearly doubled, and there are more than three times as many Hispanic residents in Grant Parish as there were 10 years ago. Only Allen Parish, which saw the departure of nearly 70 percent of its Latino population, Catahoula Parish and Concordia Parish lost more Hispanic residents than they gained.

The biggest increase in total population was seen in Rapides Parish, the area's largest parish and central

hub, which added more than 5,000 residents. Grant Parish saw an increase of more than 3,600 residents, while Beauregard Parish added nearly 2,700 new citizens, census figures show.

Catahoula, Evangeline, Vernon and Winn parishes, meanwhile, all lost residents over the past decade.

Cenla is predominantly white (68.5 percent), with blacks (26.5 percent) making up a strong minority. However, the Hispanic or Latino population has grown steadily over the past decade (up to 2.8 percent), with nearly 4,000 new residents joining the region, a jump of more than 40 percent.

Here's a look at the numbers from each of the 13 parishes in the region:

Rapides Parish

►The parish's population is 63.3 percent white; 32.0 percent is black; 2.6 percent is Hispanic or Latino; 1.2 percent is Asian; meanwhile, 1.7 percent of the residents claim multiple races

►Alexandria's population (47,723) consists of 57.3 percent black, 38.3 percent white, 1.8 percent Asian,

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CENSUS FIGURES

Here is a parish-by-parish breakdown of Central Louisiana census figures over the past 30 years:

	1980	1990	2000	2010
Allen Parish	21,390	21,226	25,440	25,764
Avoyelles Parish	41,393	39,159	41,489	42,073
Beauregard Parish	29,692	30,083	32,979	35,654
Catahoula Parish	12,287	11,065	10,920	10,407
Concordia Parish	22,981	20,828	20,247	20,822
Evangeline Parish	33,343	33,274	35,434	33,984
Grant Parish	16,703	17,526	18,696	22,309
LaSalle Parish	17,004	13,662	14,282	14,890
Natchitoches Parish	39,863	36,689	39,086	39,566
Rapides Parish	135,282	131,556	126,339	131,613
Sabine Parish	25,280	22,646	23,459	24,233
Vernon Parish	53,475	61,961	52,525	52,334
Winn Parish	17,253	16,269	16,894	15,313
Totals	465,946	455,944	457,790	468,962

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

HISPANIC GROWTH

Here is the Hispanic population by parish over the past decade:

	2000	2010	Change
Allen Parish	1,146	342	-70.1%
Avoyelles Parish	404	606	+50%
Beauregard Parish	468	1,003	+114%
Catahoula Parish	101	90	-10.9%
Concordia Parish	300	209	-30.3%
Evangeline Parish	368	776	+111%
Grant Parish	213	931	+337%
LaSalle Parish	117	331	+183%
Natchitoches Parish	566	735	+29.9%
Rapides Parish	1,739	3,418	+96.5%
Sabine Parish	642	820	+27.7%
Vernon Parish	3,111	3,775	+21.3%
Winn Parish	147	240	+63.3%
Totals	9,322	13,276	+42.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Population

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1.8 percent Hispanic and 0.8 percent other.

►Pineville (14,555) has a population that is 64.6 percent white, 30.8 percent black, 2.6 percent Hispanic, 1.5 percent Asian and 0.5 percent other.

►The town of Ball has exactly 4,000 residents, making it the third-largest municipality in Rapides Parish. It is followed by the towns of Glenmora (1,342), Lecompte (1,227), Woodworth (1,096), Boyce (1,004) and Cheneyville (625), and the villages of Forest Hill (818) and McNary (211).

►Almost 43 percent of the residents in Forest Hill are of Hispanic or Latino origin.

►Nearly three-fourths (74.2 percent) of the parish's population is over 18 years of age, leaving a population base of 25.8 percent minors.

►More than 90 percent of the parish's 55,684 housing units are occupied; there are 5,283 (9.5 percent) vacant housing units.

Avoyelles Parish

►The parish is predominantly white, with that race making up 67 percent of the population; 29.5 percent of residents are black, 1.4 percent are Hispanic; 1.2 percent are Native American; 0.9 percent of residents are another race; and 1.6 percent of the population claims multiple races.

►Marksville, the parish's largest city with 5,702 residents, consists of 50.5 percent whites, 42.9 percent blacks, 3.5 percent multi-racial residents, 1.9 percent Native Americans and 1.9 percent Hispanics.

►Bunkie, the second-largest municipality in the parish (4,171), has a black majority (57.2 percent) with 40.1 percent of residents being white and 2 percent Hispanic.

►The town of Simmesport has 2,161 residents, followed by the towns of Cottonport (2,006), Mansura (1,419) and Evergreen (310), and the villages of Moreauville (929), Hessmer (802) and Plaquemine (248).

►More than 75 percent of the parish's residents are 18 years or older, with 24.4 percent being minors.

►The parish has a 14.5 percent vacant housing rate, with 2,610 of the parish's 15,432 housing units being occupied.

Grant Parish

►More than 80 percent (81.4) of parish residents are white; 15.6 percent are black, 4.2 percent are of Hispanic or Latino origin, and 1.0 percent of the population is of Native American descent.

►Colfax, the only parish municipality with a popu-

lation greater than 1,000 (1,558), has a population of 65.5 percent blacks, 32.1 percent whites and 2.4 percent other.

►The town of Montgomery, which has 730 residents, is the second-largest municipality in the parish, followed by the town of Pollock (469) and the villages of Dry Prong (436), Georgetown (327) and Creola (213).

►Nearly 80 percent of the parish's population lives in unincorporated areas, including 94.8 percent of the 931 Hispanics in the parish.

►Adults make up 76.9 percent of the population, while those under 18 years of age make up 23.1 percent.

►Of the parish's 8,886 housing units, 15.6 percent (1,390) remain vacant.

LaSalle Parish

►The parish's population is 85.2 percent white, 11.9 percent black, 2.4 percent Hispanic and 0.5 percent other.

►Jena's population, which is 3,398, consists of 84.1 percent white residents and 11.3 percent black residents, while 6.7 percent claim to be of Hispanic or Latino origin.

►The towns of Olla (1,385), Tullos (1,313) and Urania (385) are the only other incorporated areas in the parish.

►Nearly 70 percent - 226 of 331 - of the parish's Hispanic population lives in Jena.

►More than three-fourths (76.3 percent) of the parish population is 18 years of age or older.

►The parish has an occupied housing rate of 83.4 percent, with 1,092 of 6,560 housing units vacant.

Allen Parish

►The majority of the citizens in the parish are white (71.6 percent); 23.2 percent are black, 2.4 percent are of Native American heritage, and 1.3 percent are Hispanic or Latino.

►Oakdale is the largest municipality with a population of 7,780, followed by the towns of Kinder (2,477) and Oberlin (1,770).

►Most of the parish's 342 Hispanics (61.4 percent) are located in unincorporated areas, although nearly 2 percent of Kinder's population is Hispanic.

Beauregard Parish

►More than 82 percent of the parish's 35,000-plus citizens are white; 13.1 percent are black, 2.8 percent are Hispanic or Latino, and 2.4 percent claim two or more races.

►DeRidder is the largest city in the parish, and one of the larger ones in the region, with a population of 10,578 - 526 of whom actually live in Vernon Parish. The town of Merryville, the only other incorporated municipality in the parish,

has a population of 1,103.

►Approximately 43.5 percent of the parish's 1,003 Hispanics live in DeRidder, while 54.5 percent live in unincorporated places.

Catahoula Parish

►The smallest Cenia parish in terms of population, Catahoula claims 10,407 citizens; 67.1 percent of them are white, while 31.5 percent of them are black.

No other ethnicity has a presence of greater than 1 percent.

►The town of Jonesville features nearly 22 percent of the parish's population with 2,265 residents. The village of Sicily Island has 526 residents, while the village of Harrisonburg has 348.

►Jonesville has more than double the number of black residents (1,534) as whites (699) and also features more than one-third (31 of 90) of the parish's Hispanic population.

Concordia Parish

►The parish's population consists of 57.4 percent white residents, 40.9 percent blacks, 1 percent Hispanics and 0.7 percent other.

►The largest town in the parish is Vidalia with a population of 4,299. Ferriday has 3,511 residents, followed by the towns of Clayton (711) and Ridgecrest (694).

►Ferriday features nearly 35 percent of the parish's black population, and its demographics are 83.4 percent black, 15.4 percent white and 1.2 percent other.

Evangeline Parish

►Sixty-nine percent of the residents in the parish are white, while 28.3 percent are black, and 2.3 percent are Hispanic or Latino.

►Ville Platte's population is 7,430, followed by the towns of Mamou (3,242) and Basile (1,820), and the villages of Pine Prairie (1,610), Turkey Creek (441) and Chataignier (364).

►The town of Basile's population has the largest percentage of Hispanics in the parish at 13.2 percent.

Natchitoches Parish

►Natchitoches Parish has one of the larger black demographics in the region at 41.4 percent, while 54.3 percent of the residents are white; 1.9 percent are Hispanic, and 1 percent are Native American.

►Natchitoches is the largest city in the parish and second-largest in Cenia, with a population of 18,323. The town of Campti has 1,056 residents, followed by the villages of Provencal (611), Natchez (597), Clarence (499), Goldonna (430), Ashland (269), Robeline (174) and Powhatan (135).

►Nearly 60 percent of the residents in the city of Natchitoches are black,

while 42 percent of the parish's Hispanic population lives in the city.

Sabine Parish

►The parish has a relatively large Native American population at 8.6 percent, while 3.4 percent of the people in the parish claim two or more races; 70.8 percent of the people are white; and 16.6 percent are black.

►The largest town in the parish is Many with 2,853 residents, followed by Zwolle at 1,759 and the villages of Pleasant Hill (723), Florien (633), Converse (440), Noble (252) and Fisher (230).

►Many's demographics are nearly even between blacks (48.1 percent) and whites (46.6 percent), while Zwolle has a large Native American base at 15.9 percent.

Vernon Parish

►Vernon Parish is one of the region's most culturally diverse parishes, even if 75.7 percent of residents are white; 14.2 percent are black, 7.2 percent are Hispanic, 1.8 percent are Asian, 1.4 percent are Native American, 2.9 percent claim another race, and 4.1 percent claim multiple races.

►Leesville is the parish's largest municipality with 6,612 residents; however, Fort Polk North and Fort Polk South, which both are classified as "census designated places," combined have nearly 12,000. The town of New Llano has 2,504 residents, followed by the town of Rosepine (1,692) and the villages of Anacoco (869), Simpson (638) and Hornbeck (480).

►Fort Polk plays a large role in the cultural diversity of the parish, as nearly 15 percent of the residents on base are Hispanic. However, Leesville and New Llano feature one of the region's largest Asian communities, as 3.2 percent of the residents in those municipalities claim Asian descent.

Winn Parish

►Approximately two-thirds (66.8 percent) of the parish's citizens are white, while 30.7 percent are black; 1.6 percent are of Hispanic or Latino origin; and 1.1 percent claim multiple races.

►Winnfield, the parish seat, is the only municipality in the parish with more than 400 residents. The new count shows Winnfield with a population of 4,840. The village of Dodson has 337 people, followed by the villages of Calvin (238), Atlanta (163) and Sikes (119).

►Winnfield has a slightly majority-black presence, as 50.6 percent of the city's residents are black, and 45.8 percent are white. Also, 52.1 percent of the Hispanics in the parish live in Winnfield.